



March 3, 2022
Mary Beth Cimino, RN
Arden House
District 1199 New England
Before the Aging Committee

In Support of HB 5194 AN ACT CONCERNING REGISTRATION OF TEMPORARY NURSING SERVICES AGENCIES.

Good Morning Senator Miller, Representative Garibay, and members of the Committee. My name is Mary Beth Cimino and I am here to testify in support of HB 5194.

The agencies that our home contracts with - is our problem, not the agency's staff. They, the hiring agencies, are taking advantage of a situation that effects our residents and staff. The situation, the problem is that no one wants to work in nursing homes anymore.

Our staff's morale is extremely low and trust in administration's decisions run hand in hand. Adequate, sufficient, or acceptable should not be words mentioned with nursing homes walls or of their care. Care needs to be a high standard and to be continually sustained. The people we take care of, if not a family member of yours, have been your neighbors, your neighbor's family members, your barber, pharmacy worker, mailman, lawyer, and teachers. These are amongst some the individuals that I have had the pleasure of helping with their ADL (activities of daily living).

Using a recruitment agency we all know is **expensive**. These agencies pull workers in from across the country. They put on a bidding war for staff to join their companies. Just check out Facebook and look under traveling CNAs and LPNs pages. They have the staff sign contracts that lay everything out on paper. These healthcare agencies' have staff being paid 20 to 30% more per hour than the house staff. Many of these contracts also include food, housing and transportation stipends and even more for when their staff works overtime. They have accused us of giving them the hardest assignment on a unit because they get paid more per hour, and the hostility has now begun.

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The agency staff enters our facilities without us knowing their background. Some staff, have come into facilities acting like they have never done this type of care before. Some have only done one on one care or assisted living. Sometimes we've been told they have a dementia training or experience and they haven't. But we need them to help us out. Without this single agency person staying the shift, our patient to CNA ratio can go up anywhere from 2 to 20 more residents, that we have to provide additional care for within eight hours. This has become an unrealistic task and depends on your shift and unit. You as a CNA, already have 10 to 25 residents. My home has become smarter recently and started to place agency staff on the side instead of on units in case they don't show up, which happens regularly. The administration feels that mentally this helps us to actually prepare for a shift of less staff, instead of screaming "What do you mean they didn't show up, again?" So instead we scream "Short again? My back hurts. My knees are killing me. I didn't take a break yesterday. Ughhh this can't go on".

Who is accountable and how are they accountable for not showing up and leaving us short. What is the discipline for the agency? If there is any we would like to know.

We know as house staff, it's hard for the agency staff to give the care to our residents. We know they want, require and when. Our residents want to know where a regular staff member is or why isn't so and so taking care of me today? The residents say "I don't know you" and end up at times - giving the agency staff member a rough time by being demanding more than ever or even refusing care from them. This is even more evident on the dementia units where residents are unable to express themselves like you and I can. This is where knowing your residents is crucial in order to get the tasks done while keeping the dementia resident calm and relaxed. It's next to impossible if you haven't a good rapport with them.

The best ways to avoid understaffing and using agencies staff, is to demand and put in force, levels of care while paying the house staff what is paid to the agency staff.

HB 5194 will be a great step towards properly regulating staffing agencies and holding them accountable. Please pass this bill. Thank you for your time.

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Capital testify March 3rd

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